



National Transportation Safety Board

Fuel Exhaustion Eurocopter AS350 B2

Air Methods Corporation
Mosby, Missouri
August 26, 2011

Investigator-in-Charge
Presentation



Summary

- August 26, 2011 at 1841 CDT
- Eurocopter AS350 B2 helicopter
- Operated by Air Methods
- Helicopter emergency medical services (HEMS) flight
- 1 nm from airport in Mosby, Missouri
- 4 fatalities

Preflight Discrepancies

- Daily flight log not signed
- 3 “Conform Your Aircraft” entries not signed
- Fuel samples not taken
- Helicopter not refueled
 - 1 hour of fuel onboard

Flight History

- At 1722 pilot received flight request
- Hospital patient transfer
- At 1728 flight departed
- Pilot reported “2 hours of fuel and 3 persons onboard”
- At 1758 landed at helicopter pad

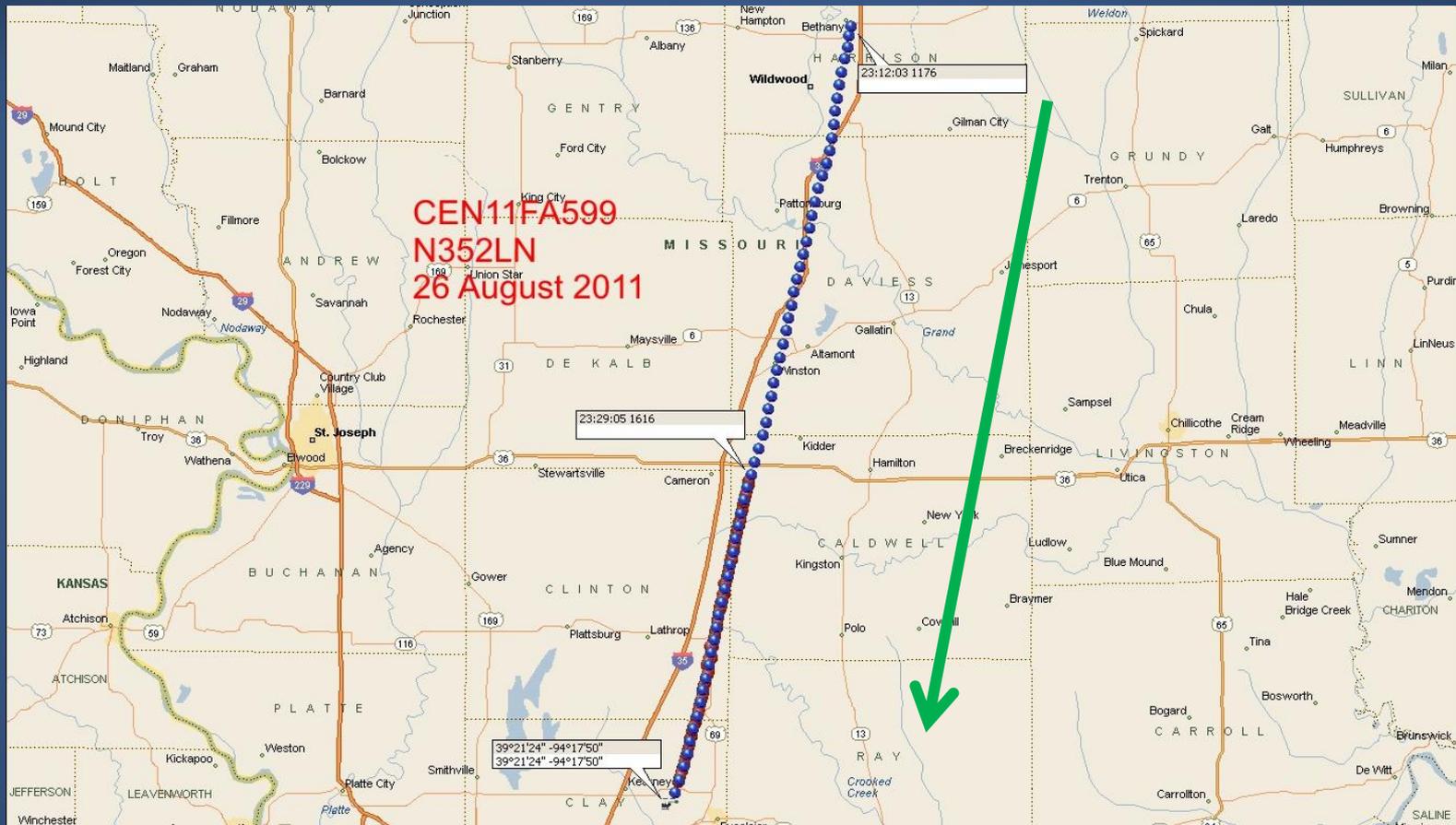
Flight History

- Pilot spoke to communication specialist from 1800 – 1806
- Admitted to low fuel situation
- Unable to fly to destination hospital – 62 nm
- Chose to refuel at Mosby – 58 nm
- Only 2 minute difference in flight time

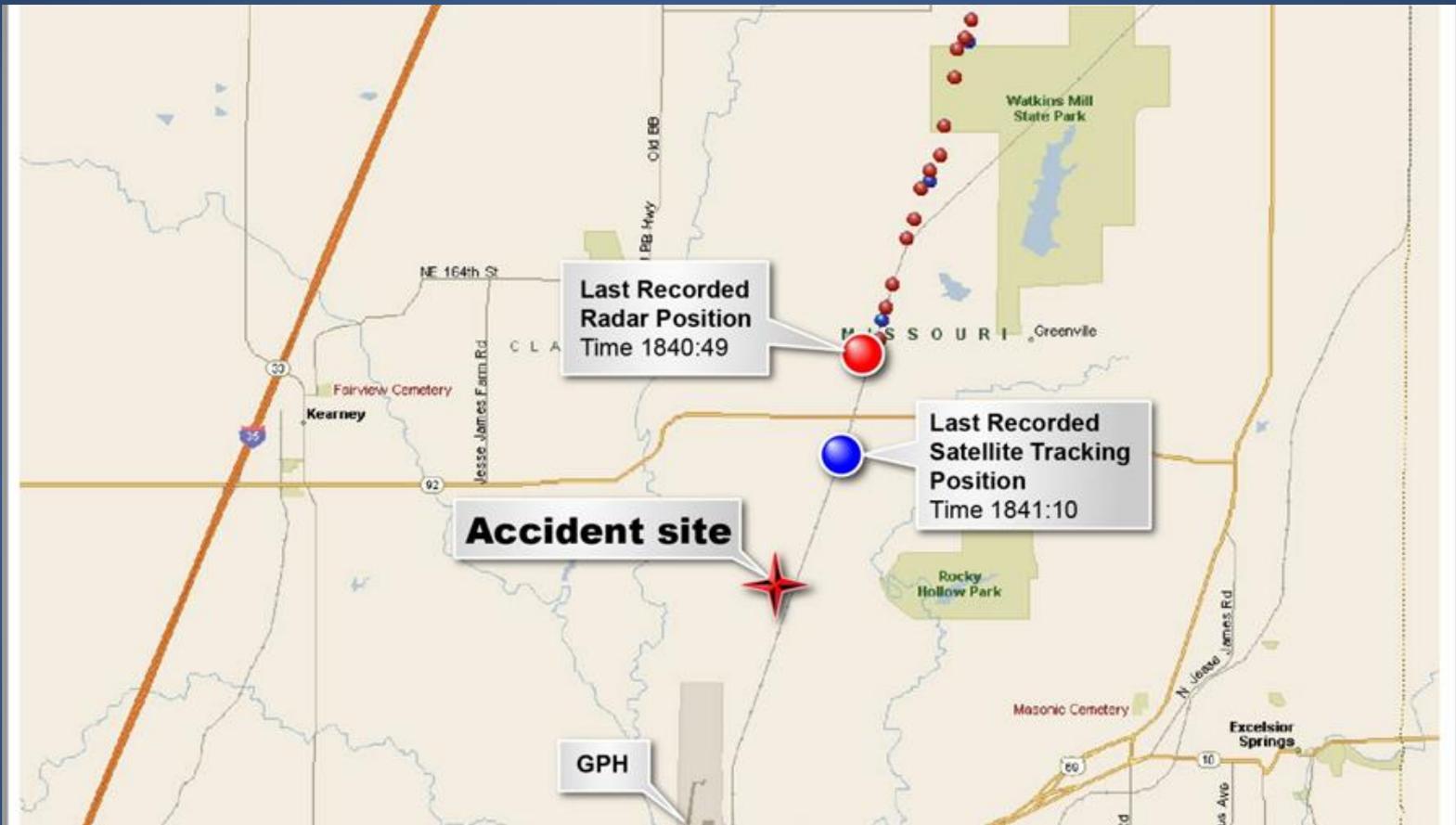
Flight History

- Operational Control Center (OCC) not notified
- At 1811 flight departed from Bethany
- Pilot reported “45 minutes of fuel and 4 persons onboard”
- Helicopter actually had about 30 minutes of fuel onboard

Flight Track from Bethany, MO



Flight Track Nearing Accident Site



Initial Findings

- No ground fire
- Fuel system was intact and tests verified its accuracy
- Less than 1 liter of fuel remained
- Loss of power due to fuel exhaustion
- Pilot and helicopter were properly certificated

Safety Issues

- Distraction due to personal texting
- OCC involvement in decision-making
- Autorotation entry procedures
- Simulator training for HEMS pilots
- Lack of a flight recorder

Parties to the Investigation

- Federal Aviation Administration
- Air Methods Corporation
- Professional Helicopter Pilots Association

Accredited Representative

- Bureau d'Enquêtes et d'Analyses (BEA)
 - Eurocopter
 - Turbomeca



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